

Fire Safe Marin Proposal to MWPA FY 2024-25

Public outreach and education is one of the 5 goals of the MWPA. The MWPA has identified Fire Safe Marin as its “key outreach and education partner and the primary source of MWPA funded wildfire preparedness and risk reduction public education efforts.” Fire Safe Marin’s educational programming aligns with and supports the four MWPA objective educational objectives related to:

1. Detection, Alert and Evacuation
2. Defensible Space and Home Hardening
3. Outreach to community and strategic partners
4. Addressing the needs of unique communities

Data-driven programming

Fire Safe Marin’s educational programming is data driven, using multiple sources to inform our programming strategies. Assuming that residents require knowledge, motivation and resources to lower their risks during a wildfire, we consider **reach and engagement, quality of content, and responsiveness to needs** as the keys to effective outreach. The following data sources provide information on all of these criteria.

Fire Safe Marin tracks its reach and engagement with the public through website and social media. Google Analytics allows us to track visitors, the pages they view and the searches they make, and geographical locations of visitors. We also review our records of thousands of emails and telephone inquiries we receive and respond to annually.

We are also informed about the baseline knowledge of Marin residents, along with their interests and concerns, through the Chipper Day survey, FSM’s professional survey by Godby Associates, the MWPA Risk Perceptions Survey, and the MWPA Evacuation Literature Review.

In the future, we intend to include data from the Home Evaluation program, and the On-Parcel Risk Analysis.

Finally, we work with professional advertising agencies CivX and Uplift Campaigns to ensure that our media products and placement are effective and state of the art. All ads are reviewed to meet accessibility guidelines. Uplift brings expertise on where, when and how many ads or impressions to purchase to saturate the market. All of our content includes reviews from industry professionals, including firefighters and wildfire scientists and researchers.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

With the goal of reaching all 260,000 residents of Marin with wildfire safety information, FSM recognizes the diversity of our population in terms of age, language, ethnicity, education, socio-economic status, interests, physical and cognitive abilities, living situations, and technical literacy. We strive to deliver programming that responds to the needs and concerns of different and overlapping target audiences and review the library of our resources and our live programming with this criteria in mind.

Our proposal for FY 2024-25 includes continued emphasis on diversity, equity and inclusion, with particular attention to reach our Spanish speaking, AFN, and aging communities.

Continued bilingual outreach and translation. All of our paid advertising and core messages about wildfire preparedness, home hardening and firesmart landscaping are produced in Spanish and English. We have a staff member and work closely with bilingual MWPA and Marin County employees bilingual digital, print and video resources. The Adapt to Wildfire campaign PSA's have been streamed in Spanish approximately 480,000 times. (update number and include Did you know and other videos)

Increased engagement with community partners. The best way to engage hard to reach groups is through trusted community based organizations, offering educational resources and experience that respond to their concerns and needs. We have existing partnerships with many NGO's like the Marin Center for Independent Living, Vivalon, North Marin Community Services, West Marin Community Services, Marin Community Clinics Health Hubs in San Rafael and Novato, the Canal Alliance, and the Multicultural Center of Marin.

Increased support for the Firewise program. Firewise sites provide a valuable network of neighbors with knowledge about local residents with Access and Functional Needs. We are working with Marin CIL to help better prepare these and other vulnerable residents through the Powered and Prepared program. We plan to increase our level of in-person engagement with the Firewise program.

Increased in-person outreach. In 2023 we launched the Ambassadors Program to provide personal interactions with over 6,000 residents throughout Marin. Recruiting from the Fire Foundry, Defensible Space Program and Firewise Leaders, we trained 18 Ambassadors to engage with people at fairs, food distribution centers, markets, health hubs, festivals, town gatherings, and community centers. One third of the Ambassadors are bilingual and the

individuality of the engagements made it possible to adapt the message to the diverse needs of different participants. We are expanding our calendar of Ambassador events in 2024-25, and offering a range of presentations suitable to a wide-range of audiences at in-side events during the winter months.

Deliverables

Website maintenance and upgrades. The Fire Safe Marin website receives up to 180,000 annual visitors. This website is used as the primary source of wildfire information and educational materials by Fire Councils throughout California, several other states, and other countries. The site requires constant maintenance and updating with new content to keep abreast of advancements in wildfire science, the progress of the MWPA's efforts, and the growing sophistication of our communities inquiries. We are in the process of a redesign of our site, to give it a more modern look and better functionality.

Monthly newsletter reaches over 12,000 subscribers with timely information intended to inspire action, interviews, articles and videos featuring MWPA work, and relevant partner messages. With a 61% open rate, our newsletters are read approximately 40,000 times per year, making it a valuable distribution channel for in-depth information to the public. The newsletter has received several upgrades and improvements which has directly led to the high open rate. In 2024 we will launch a newsletter subscription drive through retargeting ads and social media.

FSM's Social Media presence has grown steadily over the past two years. With experience, industry advice, and a growing presence online, our Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Nextdoor channels reach over 300,000 people annually. In addition, our YouTube channel serves up more than 2,700 hours of wildfire educational views. The key to social media success is a steady drum beat of new content that matches the expectations and algorithms of each channel. We meet this challenge by posting 160 different posts across platforms every month. We are also revising our YouTube titles, tags and thumbnails to anticipate common internet searches to increase viewership.

High quality video production. We strive to produce messages that reflect the priorities of the MWPA, are accurate, timely, clear, accessible, engaging and appeal to different learning needs and styles. Videos have become one of the

most important and cost effective ways to reach a targeted and diverse audience. We are building a video resource library that offers our core messages in different formats, prioritizing shorter videos (30,15, and 6 seconds) that result in increased viewership and engagement.

The Adapt to Wildfire Campaign reaches more than 1.5 residents per month. Through paid marketing, our Public Service Announcements are dynamically delivered on multiple platforms, to appear where Marin residents go for news and entertainment. Themes and topics of PSAs are timely, informative and action-oriented. Advertising is targeted to multiple demographics and audiences.

Outreach to schools includes an elementary program, *Ready, Set, Go!* that is endorsed by superintendents countywide as part of the Marin School's Emergency Preparedness programming. We will also continue our partnerships with middle schools and high schools, supporting environmental leadership programs and an interdisciplinary project that uses the Ross Valley Shaded Fuel Break as its focal point.

Firewise. There are currently 77 Firewise sites here in Marin, including more than 50,000 homes—the largest county-wide participation in the country. Fire Safe Marin provides these residents with resources and support to organize and learn about personal preparedness, alerts and warning, local evacuation plans, and strategies to make their community more fire-resistant. Fire Safe Marin will continue to host monthly meetings, conduct outreach to build capacity, help attain funding through Fire Council grants, and provide wildfire safety education and training. Post-Covid, FSM intends to have more in person interaction with Firewise residents including active participation at select local meetings, educational events, evacuation drills and neighborhood walks.

Response to Public. Fire Safe Marin receives approximately 1,000 emails and 500 phone inquiries from the public every year. In almost all instances, we provide same day responses to these requests. Not only is this well received by residents, but this reduces the workload of local fire departments.

Print Materials. Fire Safe Marin recognizes that some residents do not have access to digital media and some residents simply prefer printed materials. Fire Safe Marin creates and maintains a large cache of print materials that is accessible by Firewise leaders. Nearly all of this content is printed in both Spanish and English and all of it is available to interested members of the public. Additional material is created to present core messages in new ways or in response to public demand. For example, this year we created a new evacuation guide, a wildfire preparedness calendar, and a bird survey guide along with other

new materials. We are also in the process of piloting a small kiosk with wildfire preparedness materials for distribution to libraries and community centers.

Signage. Fire Safe Marin maintains an inventory of “Did You Know?” signs that are designed to be attached to Firewise neighborhood signs. Each sign features a short message, such as: “Did You Know?...Bamboo is a fire hazard” or “Evacuation plans save lives.” Firewise communities have access to the inventory so that messaging can be rotated and kept fresh.

Professional Training. In partnership with the Northern California Landscape Contractors Association (NCLCA), Fire Safe Marin created an online training program for professional Landscapers. FSM gave a training presentation at their recent Trade Show and will continue to partner with them to develop additional training. FSM is developing a guide for homeowners and landscape contractors to work together to make wildfire safety improvements to their property. FSM has reached out to the Marin Builders Association to explore opportunities to work with and provide training to home hardening contractors.

Defensible Space Program. Fire Safe Marin provides in-person training for the Central Marin Defensible Space program. In addition, the home evaluation report links directly to selected pages on the FSM website that provide helpful information for residents who need to make safety improvements to their property. FSM works directly with Fire Aside to continually upgrade and improve these links. A number of other counties are now using this report and linking to our website.

Spring Workshops. Fire Safe Marin will again work with Fire Departments in each of the MWPA zones to host five interactive workshops in the Spring to highlight MWPA funded projects in their communities. A highlight reel will be created for each zone for website posting. In addition, a summary highlight reel will be created for use by the MWPA to highlight all of these accomplishments.

Ember Stomp. Ember Stomp is a wildfire prevention festival that will be held annually in May to coincide with Wildfire Awareness Month. This free festival will bring together prevention partners across Marin and showcase the collaborative work our county has been doing to mitigate the risk of wildfire. Partners and wildfire service providers will prepare educational activities so that attendees leave with a specific understanding of the things they can accomplish to reduce personal and communal risk. Fire Smart landscaping and home hardening principles will be physically showcased in our fire smart landscape demo and ember resistant constructions.. In the interest of an engaging and celebratory atmosphere, the festival will have live music played by local musicians,

artwork by local artists, food trucks and activities for children based on the tools of wildfire prevention. Ember Stomp is funded by donations, sponsorships and exhibitor fees.

Promotion of MWPA Projects and Activities

Fire Safe Marin works closely with the MWPA to help create and distribute messaging to the public about their projects and programs. Our team meets regularly with MWPA staff to ensure that MWPA priorities are coordinated with our messaging.

Measures of Success Include:

- Impressions
- Website views/ google demographics
- Youtube views and level of engagement
- FW metrics: hours, investment, completion of UFA's
- Overall level of Public Engagement
- Recognition by other Fire Councils/professionals
- Review of quality and outreach by Campaign/advertising professionals
- Content of questions from public
- Email/phone response from public
- Anecdotal feedback
- A holistic education campaign has an effect on the amount and type of improvements in defensible space, home hardening, personal preparedness, etc.

The requested budget based on all of these deliverables is \$980,000 which is a reduction from last year's allocation. The deliverables and work product will be memorialized and documented through renewal of the existing personal services contract with MWPA.